

About Black Minnesotans

The following data describe the approximately 316,000 Minnesotans who indicated their race was Black alone or Black along with another race or races in U.S. Census Bureau surveys conducted between 2007 and 2011.¹ These Black Minnesotans represent six percent of Minnesota's total population.

Age Distribution

The Black population in Minnesota, with a median age of 23 years, is considerably younger than the overall population, with a median age of 37. About 40 percent of all Black Minnesotans are under age 18, compared to 24 percent of the overall population. At the higher ages, far fewer Black Minnesotans are represented. Only 3 percent of the Black population is 65 years or older, compared to 13 percent of the total population.

Figure 1: Age Distribution of Black Minnesotan and All Minnesotans, 2007-2011

Age Group	Black Minnesotans		All Minnesotans	
	Approximate Number	Approximate Share of Total	Approximate Number	Approximate Share of Total
Under 5	40,700	13%	353,000	7%
5-11	48,400	15%	489,900	9%
12-17	39,000	12%	437,600	8%
18-24	38,400	12%	505,400	10%
25-34	49,900	16%	704,700	13%
35-44	43,100	14%	702,400	13%
45-54	29,500	9%	803,000	15%
55-64	16,500	5%	611,100	12%
65-74	7,200	2%	344,300	7%
75+	3,400	1%	326,900	6%
Total	316,000	100%	5,278,200	100%

Place of Birth

Among Minnesotans of all races, 7 percent were born outside of the U.S. However, among Black Minnesotans, the rate is far higher, at 24 percent foreign-born. This represents about 76,400 Black immigrants who live in Minnesota.

The countries of birth representing the greatest numbers of foreign-born Black Minnesotans include:

- Somalia (accounting for about 26 percent of foreign-born Black Minnesotans)
- Ethiopia (about 17 percent)

¹ Five years of data were necessary to get the most reliable estimates about this population and its subgroups. All data result from surveys and therefore should be considered approximate estimates. See source and notes at the end of this document for more information.

- Liberia (about 16 percent)
- Kenya (about 8 percent)
- Nigeria (about 6 percent)
- Sudan (about 4 percent)
- Cameroon, Eritrea, and Ghana each accounted for about 2 percent of the Black foreign-born population in MN.

Together, these nine countries of birth comprise more than 80 percent of the Black immigrant population. The remaining foreign-born Black populations living in Minnesota indicated they were born in other African countries (1 percent or less within each country), Africa or a region of Africa (about 7 percent with country unspecified), or in a very small number of cases, other countries or continents around the globe. See Figure 1 on the following page for additional information.

Among U.S.-born Black Minnesotans, about 56 percent were born in Minnesota, while 44 percent were born in other U.S. states or territories. Illinois is the most common state of birth after Minnesota, accounting for about 14 percent of the U.S.-born Black population, roughly 33,200 residents. Minnesota has also seen sizable domestic migration from Black residents whose birth states were Indiana (3 percent, or about 6,000 residents), Missouri (2 percent, about 4,500 residents), and Wisconsin (2 percent, about 4,000 residents), among others.

Ancestry

"Ancestry," or one's first identified ethnic origin, is a broader term than birthplace, as U.S.-born children of immigrants will likely also claim Somali or Ethiopian ancestry, for example, if their foreign-born parents hail from those countries. For this reason, the remainder of the information describing the characteristics of Black Minnesotans is presented by the ancestry designated by survey respondents, regardless whether foreign- or U.S.-born. Due to survey sample limitations, however, data are only

Figure 2: Estimated foreign-born Black population in Minnesota by country of origin, 2007-2011

Country	Approximate share of MN's foreign-born Black population	Approximate numbers of Black Minnesotans born in this country
Somalia	26%	19,900
Ethiopia	17%	13,000
Liberia	16%	12,200
Kenya	8%	5,800
Nigeria	6%	4,400
Sudan	4%	2,900
Ghana	2%	1,400
Cameroon	2%	1,400
Eritrea	2%	1,200
Haiti	1%	900
Jamaica	1%	900
Sierra Leone	1%	700
Trinidad & Tobago	1%	600
Uganda	1%	500
Tanzania	1%	500
"Africa," country not specified	7%	5,700
All other countries	6%	4,400
Total foreign-born Blacks in MN	100%	76,400

robust enough to present for the following ancestry groups: Somali, Ethiopian, Liberian, African-American², and all other Black Minnesotans (including those who did not claim any ancestry).

Using ancestry as a lens, we find that there are about 31,400 Black Minnesotans who claim Somali ancestry; 13,400 who claim Ethiopian ancestry; 9,100 who claim Liberian ancestry; 160,300 who claim African-American ancestry, and about 101,000 who claim other ethnic origins or no ancestry in the survey. (See Figure 3). These figures, however, are likely underestimating the true size of these groups, given that many of Minnesota's Black residents did not claim any ancestry in the survey.

Figure 3: Minnesota's Black population in Minnesota by ancestry, 2007-2011

Ancestry of Minnesota's Black Population	Approximate Numbers	Approximate Share of Total
African-American	160,300	51%
Somali	31,400	10%
Ethiopian	13,300	4%
Liberian	9,100	3%
All other groups/ancestries (including unspecified)	101,800	32%
All Black Minnesotans	316,000	100%

Economic measures

Figure 4 shows the median (midpoint) income of households headed by a Black Minnesotan of the stated ancestry group, as well as the number and share of that population living above and below the federal poverty line. Of the four ancestry groups presented, Somalis have the fewest economic resources.

Figure 4: Median Household Income, Poverty for Minnesota's Black population by ancestry, 2007-2011

	Estimated Median Household Income	Approximate Number of Households	Approximate Percent Living Above the Poverty Line	Approximate Number Living Above the Poverty Line	Approximate Number Living Below the Poverty Line
African-American	\$ 26,700	51,700	67%	102,500	51,600
Somali	\$ 12,200	10,500	35%	10,700	20,300
Ethiopian	\$ 28,500	4,600	73%	9,700	3,600
Liberian	\$ 38,900	3,300	71%	6,400	2,700
All other groups/ancestries (including unspecified)	\$ 32,900	26,000	72%	69,500	27,200
All Black Minnesotans	\$ 26,700	96,100	65%	198,900	105,300

Among all non-institutionalized Black Minnesotans of typical working age (16 to 64), one-quarter are not in the labor force³, while 75 percent are in the labor force, either working or seeking work. This workforce participation rate is slightly lower than the rate for all working-age Minnesotans, at 83 percent.

² "African-American" includes those respondents who self-identified as a Black race who also indicated their ancestry was African-American, Afro-American, United States, Black or similar.

³ Among other things, those not in the labor force may be caring for young children or disabled individuals, may be disabled themselves, may be attending school, or may be discouraged workers.

However, as shown in Figure 5 below, Minnesota’s working-age Black population shows wide variation in labor force participation and employment among its various ancestry groups, with Liberians most likely to be participating in the labor force and working (rather than seeking work).

Figure 5: Employment Status for Minnesota’s non-institutionalized Black population, age 16-64, by ancestry, 2007-2011

	Approximate Number and Share Working	Approximate Number and Share Seeking Work	Approximate Number and Share Not in the Labor Force	Approximate Total
African-American	54,700	13,300	24,900	92,900
	59%	14%	27%	100%
Somali	7,800	3,000	6,600	17,400
	45%	17%	38%	100%
Ethiopian	6,200	1,100	1,400	8,800
	70%	13%	16%	100%
Liberian	4,600	700	800	6,100
	75%	11%	13%	100%
All other Black Minnesotans, incl. unspecified ancestries	34,900	7,100	11,000	52,900
	66%	13%	21%	100%
All Black Minnesotans	108,100	25,200	44,700	178,100
	61%	14%	25%	100%

Residents of Group Quarters

More than 13,000 Black Minnesotans do not reside in households, but instead live in “group quarters” settings. Group quarters may be institutionalized settings (such as correctional or mental institutions, or nursing homes) or non-institutional settings where people live in groups (such as boarding schools, hotels, hospitals, college dorms or military settings). About 4,400 Black Minnesotans who are in their 20s or 30s are institutionalized, representing about 4.4 percent of all Blacks of this age group.

Figure 6: Residents of Group Quarters Among Minnesota’s Black population, 2007-2011

	Approximated Number Living in Institutions (e.g. Corrections or Nursing homes)	Approximated Number Living In Non-institutional Group Settings
Under 20	800	2,000
20-39	4,400	2,300
40-59	1,600	1,300
60+	700	100
Total	7,500	5,700

Source and notes:

All data resulted from custom tabulations of the IPUMS version of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2007-2011 American Community Survey, prepared by the MN State Demographic Center. Five years of data have been used to create the most reliable data. Data represents the average characteristics between years 2007 and 2011.

IPUMS citation: Steven Ruggles, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Schroeder, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010.

Users are cautioned that error margins (that result from survey sampling) exist around all data points but are not shown. Data are approximate.